

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6169
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
COMUSFORAZ LAJES FLD AZ
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1306

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJECT: MODERATE AZOREAN JUNTA MEMBER ATTACKS SOCIALISTS

REF: (A) PONTA DELGADA 071 (DTG 241805Z FEB 76), (B)
LISBON 1229 (DTG 251631Z FEB 76)

SUMMARY: IN FEB 26 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, INDEPENDENT JUNTA MEMBER ALVARO MONJARDINO DENOUNCED "DIRTY GAME" ALLEGEDLY BEING PLAYED BY JAIME GAMA AND SOCIALISTS IN HANDLING OF AUTONOMY STATUTE. MONJARDINO CHARGED THAT SOCIALISTS WERE USING PROCEDURAL ARGUMENTS TO MASK THEIR OPPOSITION TO STATUTE'S ECONOMIC PROVISIONS. AZOREANS APPEAR WILLING TO AWAIT CONSTITUTION'S APPROVAL FOR PROMULGATION OF STATUTE. BUT IF NO ACTION IS FORTHCOMING THEN, MODERATES
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LIKE MONJARDINO WILL BE DRIVEN CLOSER TO THE SEPARATISTS.
END SUMMARY.

1. GAMA PLAYING "DIRTY GAME": ALVARO MONJARDINO, INDEPENDENT REGIONAL JUNTA MEMBER FROM TERCEIRA, ON FEB 26 DISCUSSED WITH EMBOFF CURRENT PROBLEMS RELATING TO STATUTE OF AUTONOMY. MONJARDINO SAID JAIME GAMA, SOCIALIST DEPUTY FROM PONTA DELGADA AND PS SPOKESMAN ON AZOREAN MATTERS, WAS PLAYING A "DIRTY GAME" IN HIS HANDLING OF ISSUE. THE JUNTA HAD NEVER, AS GAMA ASSERTED, PROPOSED THAT STATUTE BE ENACTED PRIOR TO APPROVAL BY THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS PROVIDING GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES AND MADEIRA. MONJARDINO SAID GAMA "HAD EITHER NOT READ STATUTE OR NOT UNDERSTOOD WHAT HE READ."

2. PS OPPOSES STATUTE: MONJARDINO CHARGED THAT, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, GAMA AND THE SOCIALISTS WERE USING PROCEDURAL ARGUMENTS TO MASK THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE STATUTE'S SUBSTANCE. THE SOCIALISTS OBJECTED TO KEY ECONOMIC PROVISIONS OF THE STATUTE, SPECIFICALLY THOSE DEALING WITH MONETARY AFFAIRS, REGIONAL-PLANNING AND BUDGETING, DISPOSITION OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM INTERNATIONAL ACCORDS, AND EFFORTS TO INTEGRATE THE ISLANDS INTO THE "DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT."

3. AZOREANS PREPARED TO WAIT: MONJARDINO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE JUNTA STRONGLY FAVORED EARLY PROMULGATION OF THE STATUTE BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AS A CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, BUT NOT BEFORE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO REGIONAL AUTONOMY HAD BEEN APPROVED. AZOREANS UNDERSTOOD, BUT WERE NT RESPONSIBLE FOR, THE LONG DELAY IN APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION. THE ISLANDS REQUIRED A MORE COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION NOW. EVEN SO, HOWEVER, THE JUNTA WAS NOT DEMANDING IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION. AZOREANS WERE PREPARED TO WAIT IF THERE WAS REASONABLE ASSURANCE THAT THE STATUTE WOULD BE PROMULGATED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION.

4. GOP MUST RESPOND: MONJARDINO CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT THE JUNTA HAD "DONE ITS DUTY" IN PRESENTING ITS POINT
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OF VIEW TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING STRESSING THE NEED FOR PROMPT ACTION. IT WAS NOW UP TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND.

5. COMMENT: MONJARDINO WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY BITTER IN HIS DENUNCIATION OF GAMA AND THE SOCIALISTS. IF MONJARDINO'S ASSESSMENT HOLDS, AND WE THINK IT WILL, AZOREANS WILL ACCEPT A FURTHER DELAY IN ACTION ON THE STATUTE UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION IS APPROVED. WITH PACT REVISION NOW OUT OF THE WAY, APPROVAL IS EXPECTED IN A FEW

WEEKS. IF NO ACTION IS FORTHCOMING THEN, MODERATES LIKE
MONJARDINO WILL BE DRIVEN CLOSER TO THE SEPARATISTS.
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